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The
COMMONWEAL

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Berlin Is Not Germany

THE CLOSE tie-up which many quick publicists have made between lifting the Berlin blockade and a relaxation of the Cold War is unjustified and dangerous. Commentators who are looking along surface roads to Berlin for a fluttering covey of peace doves have been softened up by the Soviet weapon of propaganda or by their own invertebrate wishing.

Somewhat opening Berlin should certainly help Berliners and Germans to a somewhat better life, and it could well be most useful in keeping the cold war from growing still grimmer, and it might save some money. But it remains terribly probable that a Berlin settlement will not result in a general German settlement. For this period of years, a general German solution is practically impossible unless one side gives up the contest, resigns its motives and policy, begins to surrender its avowed world outlook. One of the *two* sides, that is—the USSR and the countries and people and parties who join in the communist, "East" effort; and the USA with the countries and peoples and parties who join in the democratic, historically Christian outlook. Practically, the two sides which remain irreconcilable are the Soviet and the US Governments; they rule the situation.

The Germans constitute the most interesting third side to the baffling equation, and it is hard to come to a reasonable view of their rôle. There is no reason for people who live across oceans to suppose that Germany's near neighbors "know" the Germans and the German potential better because of their more immediate experience. The very fact that most of Europe has been seriously beaten about by the Germans several times this century might make objectivity more difficult for the victims than for strangers. The former victims most certainly deserve a maximum of protection, but they have been singularly incompetent at providing it with their old ideas and methods. There is a well publicized sentimental view of Germans which exonerates them from just about everything unpleasant, and demonstrates how all the troubles that have arisen around Germany have somehow been caused by the lack of appreciation and understanding and the meanness of outsiders. The German, in this view, is a sweet man ruled by a warm heart and always engaged in essential labors of true civilization. Their Catholicism and leather pants are strongly stressed by large schools of the sentimentalists. But the unreal distortions fostered on this side are well compensated by the crudities of the Hate-German school. Chest-beating anti-Nazis form a hard core of these critics; appropriately, for their condemnation of Germans is irrationally racist. Being a German makes you an automaton soldier, an overbearing Junker warlord, a spineless sycophant, an insane emotionalist, a clever scientific intellectual—all at once. Their political incompetence and tendency to rule all Europe are heavily emphasized by large numbers of these critics.

Related to the hate-Germans are many and impressive radical distrusters, such, for instance, as Walter Lippmann. Their position appears most difficult, because they evidence fear and trepidation at the prospect of the Germans taking a hand of their own in the governance of their country and the balance of Europe. At the same time, recognizing the reasonableness of that development, they want the United States to get out of the way of the Germans, leaving the way all open for them to take the actions which are feared.

A FEW THINGS about Germany might seem likely to experts and to amateurs together. That country is extremely weak now in a military way, and in order to be strong would require the help and backing either of Russia or the US—or a very, very long time. Germany inclines toward Western European civilization more than toward "the East" and communist régime. The Germans want their country to be independent as other countries are independent, and so they must fear Russian dominance. Unless German liberty is brought up to an equality with that of the other

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West European countries, it is impossible to approximate the tranquillity of order in Europe and the world.

The United States should not turn over any more German persons or lands to the mercy of the USSR. Such further appeasement, permitting the communists to fan out further over that central nation of Europe, would throw to Russia the strongest and the essential base upon which the Soviet State could pyramid over all Europe. On the opposite hand, there is no particle of evidence that Russia is resigning her logical policy of getting as much as possible of Germany into her control, as the most serious source of power to be balanced either for her or to block her. Therefore, the cold war must continue, no matter what is the disposition of Berlin. All in all, for the present period, agreement can come only with the conversion of one side away from its own foundation beliefs and acts and institutions. The Foreign Ministers can prevent the tragic difference from breaking out into flaming war.

The West must prevent a possible German state from serving as a weapon for Russian aggression, and, presumably, the Russians want to keep us from using Germany against the Soviets, which Americans have no desire to do. Some things done and proposed in the past furnish suggestions of how to serve these two purposes. The current occupation zones might be set for the indefinite future as areas where the different foreign constabularies could, on any condition, go. The Allies could continue to hold their present check over the Ruhr industries, while Russia would keep her ultimate check on Silesia and her zone in a parallel manner. Inspection of Germany might be instituted after the fashion proposed by the Baruch Committee for universal inspection of the atomic industry. A thoroughly unified and independent Germany is simply impossible while West and East are split as they are. The barriers and checks to German unity ought to be minimized. That the three Powers of the western occupation should continue to exercise ultimate police force to prevent a military threat from developing in the present Western Zone seems no more than a strict minimum. So likewise, the authority of the Powers participating in the Ruhr Agreement to take guarantees that the economic strength of the most productive center in Europe shall not be turned to their destruction, is a safety device which cannot be negotiated away in Power Conferences.

Blow at Segregation

IN RECENT years southern and border states have been meeting the growing demand for educational opportunities for the Negro by offering "equal" but "separate" educational facilities. This formula has led to many fictions, court proceedings and absurdities, as has been outlined more than once in these pages. In one notable instance the Supreme Court decreed unanimously early in January last year, that Oklahoma had to provide 23-year-old Ada Lois Sipuel with the legal education she sought. Thereupon the State Regents established (on paper) a Negro School of Law as a branch of Langston Negro University in Oklahoma City. The expense of maintaining the pretense of "separate but equal" facilities has been well illustrated in Missouri, where several years of this dual policy has resulted in excessive costs to the taxpayer: each Negro law student, for example, costing the state $807 a year as compared with $228 for each white law student.

But at the end of April the Missouri House of Representatives voted by 100 to 8 to admit students regardless of race or color to the state's tax-supported institutions of higher learning. A stunning victory for equality of opportunity in Missouri at last. The days of "separate but equal" makeshifts in some of the other states now appear to be numbered.

New Economy Drive

CONGRESS has always boasted self-appointed guardians of the nation's purse strings; Senator Byrd of Virginia and Representative Taber of New York are instances of long standing. But ever since the 1930's, at least, being economical with the public monies has not been popular in Washington. Such a policy has run counter to vast emergency needs, dominant economic theories and demagogic politics. That is why recent Senate instructions to its appropriations committee to pare appropriations for federal agencies, by an average of five percent, constitutes some sort of milestone. And the support of such Democrats as Senators Douglas of Illinois and McMahon of Connecticut is another sign of a changing attitude. In the face of the looming deficit, the stigma of reaction no longer attaches to efforts moderately to curtail present expenditures.

Senator Douglas laments the "tendency in government agencies to accumulate excess personnel" and expresses the belief that "the vast majority" of federal agencies could stand the five percent cut without impairing their effectiveness. He goes to the nub of the matter. Is there any assurance that slightly smaller agency budgets necessarily implies cuts in personnel? Very little. In fact experience indicates that personnel tends to be maintained even if agency services have to be reduced. The idea of a percentage slash all round has such virtues as simplicity, fairness to all, and practicability to commend it, but it fails to take into sufficient account certain stubborn realities.

There is this disquieting consideration: are there not certain items on the federal budget which it would be a bad economic mistake to pare

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down at all—despite great government inefficiencies? Take the Marshall Plan for an example. Any cuts that would tend to slow up promising beginnings at recovery would be self-defeating—and perhaps the psychological effect of any sizable over-all curtailment at present should also carefully be weighed.

Obviously, too, not every completed appropriation is a one-way expenditure. The investment character of much federal spending is best viewed within our borders. Conservation is a prime example; profligate waste of natural resources must be stemmed and foundations laid for future generations. It is obviously uneconomical to attempt to be too economical in this sphere. Welfare state advocates, of course, seek to pile on this argument all the traffic will bear, extending it to vast new appropriations for universal health insurance, aid to education, greatly increased social security. They present every possible expenditure for social purposes as a justified investment.

Finally, any device for cutting appropriations to balance the federal budget must be assayed in relationship to the trends in the national economy at the time. Year in year out a balanced national budget is desirable. Yet the maintenance of government spending levels without raising taxes now seems to have a decisive theoretical rôle in cushioning cyclical declines—even when that involves a deficit for the period. If such a major program of useful public works (not necessarily directed in Washington) is to be kept in the blueprint stage to forestall periods of under-production and unemployment, there must be occasions when in the face of declining revenues the government must strike out boldly with increased expenditures.

For reasons such as these no simple percentage formula can qualify as the answer to the growing disparity between government income and outgo.

The situation remains. Spurred on by international commitments and accelerated by the new military lend-lease and the prospect of tremendous farm surpluses (in addition to the billion and three-quarters worth of farm commodities already pledged to the Commodity Credit Corporation under loan) federal bureaucracy and federal spending continues to snowball. The percentage formula does have the virtue of forcibly posing the question. But how can projected savings take the form of eliminating excess personnel as Senator Douglas would have it? Only when many more groups of citizens, organizing locally and professionally, begin to supply for themselves many of the social services which, when they exist to any major degree, now derive directly from the state. Only then can an effective political opposition to bigger and bigger government (and expenditures) develop.

China Retreat

WHEN American ships in Shanghai pulled away from the port to take up positions downriver at a safe distance from China's civil war, they became symbols of what was going on in many American minds. Realizing that events have been going against us, observers here fell back too, looked over the situation and tried to find out what was wrong.

This examination provided answers oscillating from the far-left "I told you so," sneering at the corrupt Kuomintang, to the other extreme of saying that we let the Nationalists down by not giving them enough aid. Various experts and non-experts on China offered their opinions and warnings; there was considerable disagreement about how much aid we actually gave to Chiang, and how much of it was spent wisely.

The truth of the matter seemed to be that it was physically and economically impossible for the United States to apply in Asia the anti-communism formula that is working to good effect in Europe. An ERP for Asia and a Pacific Pact could not be mounted without impoverishing us and spreading out our resources too thinly.

If this is true, our present examination of affairs in China might well bring up one or two quite obvious questions about our over-all, global security and strategy. How secure are we behind the ERP-Atlantic Pact method of fighting communism? Will *it* save us from another China? Our measures in Europe are largely material: their strength is based on the power factors of Western industrial productivity and possession of superior weapons. In any terms, this is transitory security. It has been necessary to find security in these terms because they are the only ones respected by an opposing world cult of material power.

But the fact remains that what permanence there is in our efforts is derived from spiritual sources—from our belief in human rights, in free political institutions, and in that society which recognizes man's supra-temporal responsibilities and desires. So understood, our security is affected by the company we keep and the causes we take up—it rests with us to question the company of Tito or Franco or Peron in making our plans precisely because we have the ultimate dignity of man in view, and not simply the expedient aim of getting rid of Russian Bolshevism.

We think an invigorated belief in non-material values need not undermine our European policy. As Arnold Toynbee said in Chicago recently, "the Atlantic pact is like any other temporary means—useful only to gain time until spiritual forces can do their work in establishing permanent peace." To contemplate that fact might be a profitable experience for us in Europe and in Asia for the continuing struggle against antagonistic forces.

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California— Pension Paradise

Letting the tax bureau 'honor thy father and thy mother'

Harry W. Flannery

CALIFORNIA has a new pension controversy.

Last November, to the surprise of all its newspapers and most of its citizens, California made law the most liberal and unusual pension plan in the nation.

Old age pensions were increased from $60 a month to $75, and blind pensions from $75 to $85 a month.

Age eligibility was lowered to 63 years of age for anyone who had been a resident of the State for ten years within the fifteen preceding application. Residence requirements for those of 65 and over were reduced to five years within the nine preceding application.

Legislation which had required children, able to support their parents, to do so, was repealed.

The pensioner was permitted to have personal property—not to include clothing, personal jewelry, furniture, automobile, household goods, foodstuffs and fuel, interment plots, insurance for funeral or interment—to the value of $1,500; to own real property to the assessed valuation of $3,500, and to have a net income and earnings of $360 a year.

In addition, the law made director of the Department of Social Welfare the woman who had been secretary-treasurer of the organization which had sponsored the movement. She is Myrtle Williams, formerly of the Citizens' Committee for Old Age Pensions. Unless the act is repealed, she will serve until 1950, when the director will be elected by popular vote. Previously, the director was appointed by the governor.

When the votes were counted in November last year, the readers of California newspapers were almost as amazed by reports of passage of Proposition 4, for Aged and Blind Aid, as they were about the Harry Truman victory. Attaches of State Finance Director James S. Dean said quick action by the legislature was necessary to draft a constitutional amendment and subsequent special election if chaos were to be averted.

Arthur J. Will, Los Angeles County Superintendent of State Charities, said the new legislation would increase the State burden by attracting thousands more aged and blind to California. Finance Director Dean was specific in the figures he gave an assembly taxation committee. Dean said that 24,000 more applicants would be attracted by June 30; 45,000 more a year later, and by the end of 1951, another 74,900.

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GOVERNOR EARL WARREN conferred on the situation with State Department heads and the legislative secretary. A few days later, the Governor said the new legislation would force taxes up. The State Department of Social Welfare estimated that total costs to the State would be $185,488,300—a 166.9 per cent increase. Legislators talked of increasing the sales tax to 3½ percent, and boosting cigarette taxes, income, bank and corporation taxes.

Governor Warren said he was opposed to using the State's $75 million reserve fund. That, he declared, was a rainy day sum set aside for an emergency. "To use it to meet a current running expense would be like a person using his savings account to raise his standard of living," said the Governor.

"I think the best thing to do is to put Number 4 in effect and let the people themselves find out how much it will cost. Let them pay the fiddler," said Assembly Speaker Sam Collins, of Fullerton.

Attorney Joseph Scott, a leading Catholic layman of Los Angeles, denounced the new amendment to the California constitution as "contrary to the old Mosaic law of honor thy father and thy mother. It removes all responsibility from young people to care for their ageing parents. It throws these older people on the taxpayers. If my children had cast me adrift on the taxpayers," he told Kiwanis Club members at the Biltmore Hotel, "I would have haunted them from the grave."

The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce listed six of what it called the worst features of the amendment, including the claim that "an appli-

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cant could have a fortune in jewelry or automobiles and still apply for aid. Applicants may voluntarily transfer property for purposes of qualifying for aid."

Earle V. Grover, president of the chamber, declared: "We have eliminated family responsibility and made it easy for a resident of another state to send an aged or blind dependent to California to qualify for aid and subsequently to exist at the expense of our taxpayers."

The taxation committee chairman of the California Manufacturers Association recommended immediate efforts for repeal. The California Council for the Blind asked for repeal. The California State Chamber of Commerce, the California Taxpayers Association, the California Federation of Women's Clubs, the League of Women Voters, the Parent-Teachers Association, the California Association of State Welfare, the Supervisors Association, and other organizations and individuals, including Senator Knowland, joined in the demand.

In the first two weeks of January, the newspapers reported a 454.1% increase in applications over the number in the first two weeks of January 1948. In successive weeks, up to March 1, the increase continued, but in decreasing percentages.

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THE REPEAL movement continued, too. By April 15, Secretary of State Jordan said sufficient signatures had been filed with his office to assure that a repeal petition would be on the ballot. The new amendment, if passed, would continue the new pension allowances, but permit the legislature to change them. It would restore the relatives' responsibility clause, and return the power of naming the State Social Welfare Director to the Governor. Normally, the proposition would be submitted to the voters in 1950, but demands were made that it be declared subject either to an immediate special election or be put on the 1949 ballot in November.

During all this period, the supporters of the measure were not silent or inactive.

Mrs. Williams, pending set-up of her own state machinery, arranged for the counties to continue taking care of the applications and payments of pensions. With some of her aides, she made a trip to Washington, to remove apprehensions of Federal officials about features of the new law which, it had been said, would hold up Federal funds. As a result, Federal aid has not been interrupted.

As members of her State Welfare Board, Mrs. Williams obtained the services of a number of persons of established reputation. Among these are Daniel G. Marshall, Los Angeles attorney, and one of the founders of the Catholic Inter-Racial Council; Will Bassett, secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles AFL Central Labor Council; Mrs. Hazel Hurst, Pasadena, nationally known blind social worker; Dr. Frederick A. Smith, former secretary of the Los Angeles Church Federation, now director of the Lutheran welfare organization for Southern California, and Albert L. Christopher, Morgan Hill prune grower, vice-president of the California State Grange, and former supervisor in Santa Clara County.

George McLain, chairman of the board for the Citizens' Committee, disputed the damaging charges made by individuals and organizations. He said some had been guilty of over-simplification, and others of misrepresentation. He pointed to scare-charges that Federal aid would be withdrawn, and he also said that the responsibility of relatives remained, if the individual old or blind person wished to enter suit. McLain asserted that those who had originally said the additional cost would be $125 million a year had begun by December to shave these estimates by $69,500,000. His own estimate was $52,180,220. Also, by the State taking over aged and blind relief, McLain claimed that taxes throughout California would be reduced by $15 million.

"These persons are opposing the will of the people without giving the measure a chance to work," he said. "Remember nearly 2 million Californians voted for it."

To prevent the repeal proposition from getting on the ballot, McLain took steps to file a Superior Court taxpayer's suit, asserting the illegality of the proposed proposition.

In addition, the Committee began a move to recall Governor Warren. Offering a hundred thousand "Recall Warren" buttons at $1 each, Committee stickers, meeting announcements and other literature said: "If it's Pensions or Warren, let's choose Pensions!"

The number of members of the Committee increased from 25,000 before the November election to about 60,000, and a campaign is under way to increase that figure. The number of radio stations on which McLain talks every afternoon Monday through Friday was increased from six to twenty. A woman efficiency expert was called in to streamline Committee operations, and check organization operation. Among other recommendations, she arranged that all employees contacting the public over the telephone and at the reception desk be schooled in courtesy.

California citizens trying to be fair in assessing the situation are confused.

Is this move like so many others which have plagued California, or is it an honest and worthy development?

★

CALIFORNIANS recall the time when Socialist Upton Sinclair almost became gover-

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nor. Back in 1934, on his famous EPIC slogan, "End Poverty in California," Sinclair had used the pension appeal, not only for the aged, but also for the physically incapacitated and widowed, along with many Socialist proposals, such as State operation of idle factories, State distribution of farm and industrial products, and issuance of scrip to finance new State undertakings, and he had obtained enough votes in the primary to lead every other candidate, Democrat and Republican.

They remember Dr. Francis Townsend, of Long Beach, a retired physician become real estate man, who came up with a scheme for a $200 monthly pension for all over 60, with the money to be raised by a Federal sales tax of 2 per cent on all the business of the nation.

Willis and Lawrence Allen, with their $30 every Thursday, the Ham and Eggs plan, came to mind. Governor Culbert Olson and Sheridan Downey, the latter in 1938 running for lieutenant governor, were elected to office largely because they endorsed that proposal. A number of other California state and national candidates had used the movements for political advantage, but neither Townsend, Sinclair or the Allens were successful—like McLain—in putting their proposals on the State statute books.

★

WHAT IS different in this case? What is the Citizens' Committee for Old Age Pensions?

Those persons who were surprised at the Truman triumph have some idea of how passage of Proposition 4 amazed California voters. In assessing the situation in this Coast state, you should also realize that the voters are asked, at elections, to vote not only for numerous local, state and national candidates, but in addition, for local and state bond issues and propositions. All states follow such a procedure, but none to the same extent as California.

Last fall, for instance, Californians had to consider nineteen state propositions. These ranged over such varied subjects as tax exemption for veterans, local option, compensation of legislators, senate reapportionment, chiropractors, state civil service, the fish and game commission, and the one entitled, "State and Blind Aid."

Registered voters are sent a booklet stating arguments for and against each proposition, but these are necessarily brief. Even so, few voters believe they have the time to read and consider the merits of each proposition. Among the arguments on Proposition 4, as given in the booklet, was this: "Our government is showering billions of dollars upon the needy throughout the world with no questions asked and few conditions required. Meanwhile our own needy, blind and aged are struggling to exist on aid which was inadequate even before inflation."

Most of the agitation for Proposition 4 came from the offices of the Citizens' Committee for Old Age Pensions.

Its main headquarters are in downtown Los Angeles on Grand Avenue, in what used to be a Cunningham and O'Connor undertaking parlor. Over the main entrance is a sign with this wording: "Through these portals pass the builders of a nation. They shall not be forgotten." On one of the porch pillars, under a statement that this is committee headquarters, is the announcement: "Pension problems solved here."

Inside, the visitor confronts a reception counter behind which is an oil painting in purple greys of a winter scene, and a still life of colorful fruits and flowers. A pleasant voiced woman asks your business and gives each person a number so that each will be called in turn. When I first entered, this woman was reading a poem that had been handed her by an old man.

"Why," she remarked, "you're a genius! That's wonderful. You have a great heart."

On benches along the wall sat other old folks. One was a white-bearded man with flowing white hair, who wore a long sheet-like robe over what looked like pajamas. His feet were bare.

As each was called, he was interviewed by one of the four social workers in the offices inside. One old woman who had moved to new quarters, while still paid up in rent at another, wanted to know whether she could get an allowance to cover. Another wondered whether the new law would permit her to continue raising chickens.

In an office devoted to arranging the monthly meetings is a map of the state pin-pointed with locations of established branches. A schedule gives information on the places, times and features of the 160 sessions for the current month.

Meetings open with the Lord's prayer, King James version, followed by the Salute to the Flag. A speaking team from one of the various area headquarters then takes over. Sometimes there is choir singing and entertainment by magicians, ballad singers or dancers. Meetings end with singing of "Lord be with You 'til We Meet Again."

Picnics are gathering places for larger groups, with more entertainment and speakers on the programs on such occasions. The old folks bring their food, and are given coffee and doughtnuts on the grounds.

★

A MAP OF THE state also is in the office of the radio director, with the coverage area of each of the twenty stations marked on it. Only the northern coastal area and some of the interior desert region are now missed by the network.

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Broadcasts are made from Sacramento and also from a modern sound-proof and well-equipped studio in the basement of the Grand Avenue building. The radio programs also end with a prayer, written to fit each occasion. The prayer was an innovation at the time of the election, and has continued since because it is popular. Whenever it is omitted, because of McLain's extemporaneous additions to the script, numerous letters asking its resumption are received.

Files of plates on which are the names and records of members, former members and subscribers to the monthly paper, "National Pension Advocate," are in the basement. The paper is not published in this unusually well equipped plant, but all other mailing pieces are. Folders, pamphlets, postal cards, window stickers and meeting notices are turned out on the press.

One of the storerooms is piled to the ceiling with boxes filled with envelopes addressed to every registered voter in the State. These were said to be ready in case the repeal proposition goes on the ballot.

McLain himself has quarters in a one-room former loft at the rear of the building, where probably the night man at the mortuary used to await calls. He is given the place rent free by the board of trustees, who also voted McLain his weekly salary of $60, which he gets as chairman of the Committee. They also approve his expense account. At the last election, McLain stated he had not gained financially from the Committee, and showed that he owned nothing but a ten-year-old automobile, and had a bank balance of but $87.

McLain organized the Committee in 1941. He had been a member of the staff of the district attorney's office of Los Angeles County, assigned to investigate complaints of unfair budgeting by aged and blind persons. He learned that most welfare officials did all they could to keep sums paid to pensioners at a minimum, and he decided to form a committee which, at $5 a year, would represent these citizens individually and as a group.

"Why these old persons were never told of their rights," said one of his staff. "When they needed false teeth, for instance, they were not informed they were entitled to an allowance to get them."

★

McLAIN IS 48 years old, married, with a son who works in the mailing office. He is over six feet tall, big-boned, has a small mustache and wears black-rimmed glasses. He is personable and most effective on the platform and radio, knowing how to use his appeals and attacks to best advantage. Those who know McLain say he is sincere in his efforts. He knows the pension situation intimately and has devoted his entire time for the last eight years to promoting the cause of his clients. Some of those who tell you he would like to be governor in 1950 say his weakness is that he is familiar with no other business of the State except pensions. However, pensions always have been a means to power in California politics, and any man with a newspaper with 60,000 circulation, an audience over twenty radio stations, the gratitude of hundreds of thousands of old and blind persons, and the appeal that goes with aiding them, cannot be dismissed.

At the same time, other men with an eye on 1950 and Governor Warren's office are saying nice things about Proposition 4. Kenny, who once lost to Warren, is now in the legal battle to prevent the Proposition's repeal, and this may be a means to his political comeback. That comeback had failed when he took up the banner of Henry Wallace in the last campaign. James Roosevelt, son of the late President, and former State chairman of the Democratic Party, has been using his radio time and other occasions to speak well of the Proposition and the old people. And the parade is just forming.

Whether it will add to the confusion of citizens in California, or whether it will help them learn enough to decide justly about Proposition 4, is a question.

Signs of a Renaissance

Evidence that religion in films can avoid sentimentalism

John A. V. Burke

A WRITER in one of those mysterious magazines which appear from time to time to deal with films, glitter for a few months, then disappear like fireworks, treated his readers a couple of years ago to an article entitled, "I Hate Religion in Films." The context made me feel that the writer probably hated religion anywhere. However, further reading of the article in question left me with the conviction that, with one important difference, I had much in common with its author.

What he disliked in the films he mentioned was what he thought was religion, whereas I was appalled by the fact that it was not. "Religion" means a way of life and flows from the convictions which govern our ideas concerning life and the way it should be lived. Consequently, for religion to be a convincing ingredient of any film which deals with people whose way of life is colored by their beliefs in, say, the Christian or Marxist or Mohammedan way of life, it should *flow from the story itself*. Any suggestion that it has been added for the sake of effect produces a

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film which is an embarrassment to members of the Faith and a source of derision to their enemies.

There seems no end to the films which make use of religious subjects with an eye on the box-office. It is well known that certain emotional reactions can be expected from suitably sentimental scenes in church or convent or monastery, and as a result we are treated to pictures which are built round a nunnery or presbytery just for the sake of effect. Seldom can even the best directors resist the temptation to wring the withers with a cowl or wimple. Witness the incredibly banal ending of the film version of *Brighton Rock,* in which a simpering Sister destroyed the significance of the utterances about the mercy of God. They originally had point because, in the novel, they were uttered by an old and experienced priest in confession. In fairness to the director of this film, it must be added that the author connived by agreement with the vandalism his magnificent story thus suffered. A further recent example is the episode in *Paisan* which takes place in a Franciscan Friary. It is false and stupidly sentimental. Rosselini, whose gift for observation has brought him to the top rank of cameraman directors, is here guilty of the fault of artificiality which mars so many films which use religion as a feature. The unvarnished truth about life in a monastery—or the story of a soul in love with God—is usually itself of sufficient intrinsic dramatic worth not to need the gilding of the glamor department.

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IT MIGHT HAVE been thought that films with a religious theme could not be really successful. The phenomenal success of *Monsieur Vincent,* however, is proof of two things. First, that films with a religious theme can be artistically satisfactory. Second, that people will go to see them. *Monsieur Vincent* has broken records wherever it has been shown. In every large city and town in France and Belgium, in Italy, in South America, it has attracted the greatest interest. In London it has achieved a record. This interest, though mainly inspired by Catholic reviews of the film, is not exclusively due to Catholic support. The crowds that have flocked to this cinema are certainly not all Catholics. Neither are the critics of the national press who with a singular unanimity hailed the film when it was shown to the press last summer. I quote Leonard Moseley as typical of the rest: "It is one of the greatest pictures that has ever been made and certainly the most moving. . . . I do not know anyone who would not want to see this film, for it is full of moments you will cherish. I only hope someone will have the intelligence to take it and show it far beyond the confines of a Mayfair cinema."

Monsieur Vincent may be regarded as the first of a series of films which will demonstrate that, when treated with honesty, religion can both serve the cinema and be served by it. Though it has carried off a number of distinctions at the Festivals and other concourses of merit, and though the performance of Pierre Fresnay as Vincent de Paul is one of the most perfect pieces of work to be seen for many years in any clime, the film is not without weaknesses. The vast amount of material available in the life of de Paul inevitably makes for anachronistic compression. The characterization of other figures in the story does not escape theatricality. The telescoping of the Thirty Years War leaves the British audience perhaps confused as to the significance of events. Still, *Monsieur Vincent* has inaugurated a new era of religious films of quality, films in which basic charity need not be obscured by pious gestures and sentimental phrases.

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IT IS, therefore, satisfactory to know that the team which made the Vincent de Paul film has also made *Dr. Laennec,* which had its premiere in Metz on November 29th. Laennec is principally famous for the fact that he discovered the method of stethoscopic auscultation and thus revolutionized war against tuberculosis. He was a man of remarkable character. All his life a victim of the dread disease which at length carried him off, he fought valiantly and unremittingly against his "enemie," as he termed it. Born at Quimper in 1781, Rene-Theophile Laennec is considered, both in France and elsewhere, as "the father of modern medicine." His scientific ardor was equalled only by the devotion with which he practiced his religion. He sacrificed everything to his profession, his family, his health, ambition. His life was an example of one who devotes himself entirely to the service of humanity. Such a life has obvious attractions for the film-maker and Maurice Cloche, who has set himself the task of making filmically known those Frenchmen who have been of great service to their country, has repeated with *Dr. Laennec* the technique which he brought to *Monsieur Vincent.*

Once again he has sought the financial assistance of the many when refused by the self-interest of the few. Once again he has the cooperation of the team of technicians who helped to make *Monsieur Vincent* memorable. Claude Renoir's beautiful photography has been repeated. Jean Bernard-Luc again provides the script. The small studio at Billancourt is the scene of efforts which would cause some of our Hollywood-minded technicians to suffer from claustrophobia.

Maurice Cloche writes: "If this film has been made, it is only because thousands of friends of the French cinema had confidence in

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me. When I found that a number of professionals had no faith in this film, I asked, as I did in the case of *Monsieur Vincent,* that the cinema-goers give me their support. We have been able to bring together thousands of people willing to assist us in putting on the screen one of the great but comparatively little known Frenchmen. Sums amounting to 1,000 francs have been arriving at the studio each day till the film was finished, thus proving that in using a subject of such nobility and humanity one had the enthusiastic backing of the cinema-goer."

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MAURICE CLOCHE has expressed his intention to continue to make films with similar subjects. He proposes to do so with the help of the same financial backing, that is to say, the ordinary people who will contribute their modest share, gaining a similarly modest profit but having the satisfaction of knowing that they are helping to produce films that elevate rather than lower human dignity, films that present a truer picture of France to the world than many of the facile productions that win the easy applause of the film-debauched.

I saw *Dr. Laennec* in the studio projection-room at Billancourt and can witness that it has the same qualities of integrity, simplicity, human appeal and recognition of the trancendental things which, in addition to great skill on the part of actors and executives, made *Monsieur Vincent* such an outstanding piece of work. Further, I have no hesitation in hailing it as a second really religious film from the same source. If Maurice Cloche would now turns his attentions to a film life of Leon Harmel, the industrialist, friend of Leo XIII and father of Catholic Sociological Action, he would complete a trilogy of film biographies that would set the foundation for truly religious films in the commercial cinema with which no one need be embarrassed.

Despite popular opinion to the contrary, it is not often that the Catholic Church officially associates itself with the production of a film. In the case of *Monsieur Vincent,* it was a section of the International Catholic Cinema Office which initiated the collection of its production funds. *Dr. Laennec* was not assisted by any such intervention, though it has the approval and encouragement of the Film Office. But now we come to a film which has, in the most explicit form, the approbation and encouragement of the Church through the mediation of the International Catholic Cinema Office. Indeed, not only has the Vatican manifested its satisfaction but other denominations also have been asked for and have accorded their patronage. The cinematographic services of the United Nations also have given their patronage to what is, I think, the first international effort to make a film dealing with the Passion of Our Savior.

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UNDER THE TITLE, *The Divine Tragedy,* a project is now well developed to produce in at least three languages a film centering round the last hours of the Life of Christ. It will be entirely uncommercial in conception, apart, of course, from the necessary expenses of production which are being collected throughout the world from persons interested in the tremendous influence for peace which such a film is calculated to wield.

It has been the dream of Abel Gance for many years. His is a name that needs no introduction to those versed in the early history of film. The celebrated author of *J'Accuse, Napoleon,* and other similar films is one of the few great names who rank with D. W. Griffith and Chaplin as truly significant in the development of the cinema. Gance has written the scenario for *The Divine Tragedy* and starts from a conception of the story which is from every point of view entirely fresh. It is completely penetrated with the spirit of charity towards God and man, and, linking up the modern frantic search to control atomic energy with the political and religious intolerance which brought about the death of Christ, shows that, if atomic warfare should blast the world, it will be equivalent to crucifying again the Savior of mankind, for the message of *The Divine Tragedy* is that all men are brothers in Christ and whatever is done to the least of men is suffered, eventually, by all.

The film will be made in Egypt and Switzerland. The cast is entirely non-professional. The part of Christ will be played by a Greek priest who will not again be seen on the screen. The difficulties of censorship which prohibit the figure of Christ may present difficulties to those who will want to have the *The Divine Tragedy* shown in England, but since the film is intended rather as a religious discourse than an entertainment, it is to be hoped that by the time the film is ready for distribution the authorities will have been induced to relax their rules for such an exceptional case.

With three such films as *Monsieur Vincent, Dr. Laennec* and *The Divine Tragedy* available or shortly to be so, there is every reason to hope that the bias against religion in films discernible, and rightly so, among some critics, will be dissipated by the recognition of true worth and honesty.

No one wants to see the screen used exclusively as a sounding pulpit. But religion has a right to make use of the screen and when it does, it should be accorded the courtesy of competent production and adequate presentation.

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Japanese Election

The contest in Japan is crucial in a revolutionary Far East

Lafe Franklin Allen

IN CHINA, the success of the Chinese Communists marks the failure of American foreign policy in that country. Our emerging failure is the result of a number of circumstances. One of them is that we have had to deal on the scene with a Chinese government tired out by years of civil war, split by dissension and accused of being out of touch with reform movements underway in Asia.

At this time American foreign policy in the Far East will have to be re-examined. In any such planning, Japan will receive close attention; after what we have learned in China, it becomes more and more important that we encourage in Japan a truly democratic and effective government.

In this respect, a study of the recent election in Japan will indicate the temper of forces at work there among the people with whom we are dealing. THE EDITORS.

WHEN JAPAN'S Socialists polled more votes than any other party in the national elections of April 1947, General Douglas MacArthur hailed the results as an overwhelming choice by the Japanese people of a moderate course, divorced from the extremes either of right or left. A similar evaluation of the results of last January's balloting in Japan is impossible. Indeed, the outstanding feature of the latest Japanese national election, in which more than 30,000,000 voters showed up at the polls, was the pronounced trend to extremes of both right and left and the collapse of middle of the road parties.

It should be understood at the outset that ultimate power in Japan rests with the supergovernment of Douglas MacArthur. The recent election was significant, however, as a gauge to measure the political temper of the Japanese people in this fourth year of Allied occupation.

Exceeding its most optimistic expectations, Japan's small but clamorous Communist party increased its membership in the new Diet from four to 35 seats. They polled 3,000,000 popular votes, more than twice as many as they got in 1947. At the same time Shigeru Yoshida's conservative Democratic Liberal party boosted its number of Diet seats from 132 to 263, thereby becoming the first postwar Japanese party to muster a clear-cut parliamentary majority.

Gains of rightists and leftists were made at the expense of the centrist parties from which Japan's coalition governments of the last year were drawn. Diet membership of the mildly radical Socialists, for example, fell from 143 to 49, the Democrats from 124 to 68 and the People's Cooperatives from 31 to 14.

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THE PHENOMENAL gain of the Communists takes on added emphasis coming at a time when the Red tide has engulfed China and is rising elsewhere in the Far East. The Communist electoral successes coincide, too, with United States efforts to make Japan an outpost of western influence in the Orient. A post-election analysis of the Japanese vote reveals several reasons for these unexpected gains, not all of which mean that Japan is in any immediate danger of falling within the Soviet orbit.

The first reason was the widespread revulsion of the Japanese electorate with the incompetence and corruption which marked the régimes of well-meaning but bumbling Tetsu Katayama and his successor, Hitoshi Ashida, who wound up the last Diet session in jail, charged with bribe-taking. Said the *Nippon Times* on this score:

> It must be frankly recognized that the surprisingly large Communist vote was largely a protest vote. It is evidence of a great discontent on the part of a substantial proportion of the public. Most of those who voted for Communist candidates probably have no interest in or understanding of Communism, but they voted for the Communists in order to give vent to their dissatisfaction with the powers that be. It was undoubtedly an unwise way to express their dissatisfaction, but as to the existence of this dissatisfaction this was an attention-demanding demonstration whose meaning cannot be mistaken.

Then there was the psychological factor of the sweeping Red victories in China. Japanese Communists played on the fears of their countrymen by preaching that after China Japan was next on the Soviet timetable. They argued persuasively that the Japanese should get off on the right foot with the inevitable new régime by voting left.

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They said Red China would not do business with a politically conservative Nippon, that down would clang an iron curtain, shutting off Japan from her prewar sources of raw material in Manchuria and North China—already under Communist control.

The Communists and General MacArthur dislike and distrust one another. The Communists have gone as far as they dared to block occupation policies, while MacArthur hasn't hesitated to crack down on radical excesses. In view of this well-advertised mutual animosity, a certain number of leftist ballots can be interpreted, then, as a protest vote against the American régime. Premier Yoshida himself underscored this point when he observed recently that there were "some grains of truth" in reports that many Japanese voted for Communists in protest against the occupation.

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NOR DID Japanese labor like General MacArthur's ban on strikes by government employees. A vote for the Communist ticket was one pointed way of registering this objection. Furthermore, several of Japan's leading labor leaders, including Katsumi Kikunami and Kazuyoshi Dobashi, electioneered and won seats as Communists, a fact not calculated to add oil to waters already roiled by labor discord.

And, finally, the skillful campaign waged by the Communists was in no small way responsible for their electoral showing. They soft-pedalled their objections to popular Emperor Hirohito. They capitalized on the mistakes—both honest and dishonest—of the administration parties. They needled the low-paid workers, caught in a vicious postwar inflationary spiral. They harped successfully on the theme of high taxes, tempting the voters with pledges to abolish the painful levies. With no hope of winning parliamentary control and its accompanying responsibility, the Communists promised pie in the sky and Japanese by the hundreds of thousands reacted accordingly.

These are the factors which Kentaro Yamabe, Communist party spokesman, said contributed to his party's surprising showing at the polls:

1. Voters' disillusionment with middle of the road parties.

2. MacArthur's anti-strike order affecting government workers.

3. Communist victories in China and "favorable conditions for communism all over the world."

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AND WHAT were the factors behind the smashing triumph of Yoshida's Democratic Liberals?

First of all, as the "out" party, they were in no position to grant the favors for which Japanese industrialists had paid huge bribes to government officials. Willy-nilly they escaped the brush of scandal which tarred the "ins."

Then, too, although many Japanese decry the implication of hidebound reaction which comes from the "ultra conservative" tag which American newspapers have hung on the Democratic Liberals, Yoshida's party nevertheless represents the most conservative element in Japanese politics today. As such it attracted the votes of small and large businessmen and industrialists. It appealed also to the governmental bureaucracy, of which Yoshida himself is a typical example. The Democratic Liberals were able, too, to hold the support of the traditionally conservative farmers, contented as pigs in clover with the occupation-sponsored land reform program.

Finally, the big vote cast for the Democratic Liberals indicated that millions of Japanese were sick and tired of vacillating middle of the road coalition governments. Rightly or wrongly, by their ballots some 13,500,000 Japanese—approximately 45 per cent of all who voted—said they believed that a "powerful" party was needed to lead the nation out of the political and economic wilderness.

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FLUSHED with the surprising election success of his party, Kyuichi Tokuda, general secretary of the Japanese Communists, boasted that his partisans would unseat Yoshida "within one year." Yoshida, the three-time Japanese premier, demonstrated shortly after the election, however, that he didn't propose to take the Communist attack lying down.

"The Communists," he said evenly, "are preventing proper tax collection, interfering with rice collections from the farmers, disturbing labor and sabotaging the production of essential materials such as coal. All these actions are definitely unpatriotic in Japan's present critical state. We must attack them if our rehabilitation program is going to succeed."

Yoshida, a career diplomat who was ejected from public life and jailed because of his opposition to the jingoists who ran Japan before V-J Day, said he would sponsor "strong policies." These policies will include pruning government payrolls of surplus workers, tighter control over labor to check the rash of strikes which have hamstrung recovery efforts, and control over wages and prices. Although some of Yoshida's conservative colleagues have balked at controls which must necessarily go hand in hand with the economic reform program ordered by MacArthur, Yoshida himself has given no indication of shying away from the harsh realities which confront his nation. The ballots were no sooner

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counted than he summoned newsmen and told them that the nine-point economic recovery program for Japan prescribed by Washington was "something I have been trying to get the Japanese to do all the time." And his Diet majority will make the program work, Yoshida declared resolutely.

The middle of the road parties on which General MacArthur pinned such high hopes two years ago have for the time being been swept into the discard, thanks to their own inefficiency, dishonesty and internal bickering. As it now stands, the country is in the hands of the conservatives, with the Communists jockeying to establish themselves as the obvious alternative if the Yoshida administration falls. This situation was lamented editorially by such newspapers as the New York *Herald Tribune* and the London *Times*. The *Herald Tribune* took no pains to hide its dissatisfaction with the election of "men who hardly conceal a desire to sabotage American policies."

Some Japanese have taken issue with the point of view projected by these newspapers. They ask who should the majority have voted for if not for Yoshida's party? The Communists? Or perhaps the discredited Socialists or Democrats? The giant Japanese daily *Mainichi* thought editorially the criticisms abroad of the Japanese election results were "very harsh to the Japanese people" and were likely to brake development of a western democratic system by sowing distrust of the electoral process.

Considering the alternatives the voters had, it is difficult to see how Japan's purposes or those of the United States would have been better served by any different results. And as for the charge that obstructionists were now in the saddle in Japan, it should be remembered that Yoshida, with all of his conservative views, was booted from public office and subsequently jailed by the militarists whom he opposed. Furthermore, before Yoshida or any of his Diet colleagues could even run for office they were thoroughly screened under terms of the Allied purge directive which relegated to private life former militarists and totalitarians.

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THE DAY after the national balloting, General MacArthur said "the people of the free world everywhere can take satisfaction in this enthusiastic and orderly Japanese election, which at a critical moment in Asiatic history has given so clear and decisive a mandate for the conservative philosophy of government."

No one can deny that the election was orderly as well as enthusiastic. Indeed, when 70 per cent of the eligible Japanese voters turn out on election day, stay-at-home American voters are given an object lesson in the responsibilities of citizenship. No one can quarrel with MacArthur's statement that the Japanese gave a clear and decisive mandate for the conservative philosophy of government. The only point open to argument is the General's assertion that the "people of the free world everywhere can take satisfaction" in the election results.

The only "satisfaction" likely to be derived by any people of the free world will come from the elimination of the Communist threat in Japan. But this threat won't vanish by any such measures as establishing a parliamentary Committee on Un-Japanese Activities, recommended in all seriousness by Premier Yoshida. It will disappear only if the conditions which breed communism are removed. This is no less manifest in Japan than it is in Italy or Greece, China or Burma. Said the *Nippon Times* in an editorial analysis of the Communist trend in Japan: "Not suppression and opposition, but vigorous and progressive social reform is the only effective antidote to communism."

But "vigorous and progressive social reform" demands vigorous and progressive guidance—which brings us to the crux of the real problem in Japan today: the tragic dearth of wise, energetic, honest, inspirational leadership of the type the country must have if it is to resume its position in the concert of nations. Ironically, outside of the Communist Party, where Sanzo Nozaka is a notable example, no new, virile leader has emerged to guide Japan in the troubled days ahead.

With due regard for Yoshida's integrity and character, Japan's bankruptcy of leadership is exemplified by the fact that since the beginning of the occupation, the Japanese have turned three times to this 75-year-old career diplomat to head their government—an inference of indispensability which his record fails to justify.

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SPEAKING this month in Tokyo, General MacArthur made it clear that the problem of leadership is now critical, when he said that the tactics of our occupation in Japan have changed, and that this change is designed to give the people more control over their own affairs. He said to the Japanese: "That Allied forces still occupy your native soil is thus far by no means due to any fault of yours . . . but rather to events and circumstances elsewhere, beyond your capacity to influence or control. . . . The character of the occupation has gradually changed from the stern rigidity of a military operation to the friendly guidance of a protective force. . . . It is my purpose to continue to advance this transition just as rapidly as you are able to assume the attending autonomous responsibility."

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The Labor Movement

A Union Debate on *The Nation*

THE HALL was packed. The debate went along in orderly fashion. In fact, the chairman, as he admitted later, was just about to compliment the delegates for keeping the proceedings on such a high level. Suddenly a delegate in the front row jumped to his feet and started plowing back through the seats in an effort to punch a heckler in the fourth row. Others intervened and the flurry died away, but it was enough to prove that down beneath the surface calm, feelings were running high at the April meeting of the Representative Assembly of the New York local of the Newspaper Guild.

The debate was over an old sign of contradiction, the action of the New York Board of Education in removing *The Nation* from the city's high school libraries because of a series of anti-Catholic articles by Paul Blanshard.

Last year the executive committee of the Guild voted to put the union behind the movement which had been organized to fight the action of the Board of Education. They contributed $100 to the cause. Although this committee was predominantly pro-Communist, even the anti-Communist members supported the move as involving a question of "free press." Besides which, some of them had not read the articles at that time.

In January of this year the newly-elected and newly-complexioned committee voted 11 to 6 to "cease all further action" in connection with *The Nation* controversy. The majority included Catholic, Protestant and Jewish members. The six dissenters were all anti-Communists. Sensing an opportunity to split their opponents, the Commie faction in the union jumped in with both feet. George Morris wrote a column in *The Daily Worker* charging that this vote of the committee proved that the ACTU (Association of Catholic Trade Unionists), together with a Social Democratic group taking its lead from David Dubinsky, now controlled the Guild.

Most of the active Guild members knew perfectly well that neither the ACTU nor the Social Democrats nor both together controlled the Guild. Nevertheless, it looked for a time as though the Stalinists had found themselves a good splitting device.

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THIS SPLITTING device they sharpened for a time and finally swung at the April meeting of the Representative Assembly, a delegate body of several hundred members representing all the units of the big New York local. They presented a motion to reverse the vote of the committee and return to the position of the Guild under the old committee.

Perhaps the most effective speech of the evening was that made by Henry Moscow of *The Post,* the bearded young president of the local. Admitting that he opposed the Board of Education's action in taking *The Nation* off the school list, Moscow pointed out that Catholics had a right to resent the articles, that it was not a clearcut question of free press, and that since Catholics made up 50 percent of the Guild membership, further support of *The Nation* became "a question of splitting the Guild right down the middle" and sacrificing our unity on union matters in behalf of a movement which had apparently come to a dead-end anyway.

It was this appeal to such practical considerations as union unity that carried the most weight with doubtful delegates. Jerry Tallmer of *The Nation* unit of the Guild emphasized the same point in reporting that his unit had itself voted unanimously to back the Guild's withdrawal from the protest movement. He described it as a necessary sacrifice of "principle for policy."

Speaking for the other side, Jerry Tuck of *The Post* and Frank Irwin of *The Times* were outstanding for the sincerity and moderation of their remarks. Irwin conceded that the Blanshard articles, among other things, held certain teachings of the Catholic Church "up to ridicule" and said that if he had been a Catholic, he would have resented them himself. He also admitted that the articles came close to "the borderline" which separates legitimate from illegitimate discussion. Nevertheless, he maintained that in the interests of free inquiry a magazine that prints such articles should be permitted in the high schools.

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OF THOSE who favored dropping the fight for *The Nation's* reinstatement few delved into the principles and theories involved. Rosalind Neville from *The Journal-American* brought out that it was hard to see how the cancellation of school subscriptions paid for, through their taxes, by Catholic and non-Catholic parents constituted a violation of freedom of the press. Which was a good point. However, she maintained that it was enough that the Blanshard articles were critical of the Catholic faith. She apparently saw no distinction between rational criticism and criticism which seeks to stir up prejudice, bigotry and contempt for Catholics and Catholic priests as such. It is for this reason that many critics have maintained that the Blanshard articles are anti-Catholic in the sense that we speak of anti-Semitic. A few liberals would maintain that even anti-Semitic literature should be permitted in the schools. The writer is not one of them. But it is much more fashionable in some circles to defend anti-Catholic publications than to defend anti-Semitic ones.

In general, though, the discussion was intelligent and thorough. When it came to a vote, those who favored four to one. It was good to win, but it was even better to see that newspapermen and women could discuss the thing with so much common sense and so little emotion. In spite of the near-fistfight. And it was heartening to see the Commies so completely foiled in their attempt to split the anti-Communist wing of the Guild. If anything, the debate increased the respect which members of that group hold for each other. Certainly it impressed some of the Catholics involved that there were non-Catholics on the other side of *The Nation* thing who are as decent as anyone you would want to meet anywhere, at any time.

JOHN C. CORT.

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Catholic International News

The Church in Viet-Nam

THE PARTICIPATION of Catholics in Viet-Nam with the large majority of their non-Catholic countrymen in a fight for independence is a boon to the development of the Church in French Indo-China, according to a study of religion in Viet-Nam made by an expert, E. Duperray, for the Paris Catholic Information Center.

The part played by Catholics in the battle for self-government, the writer points out, is helping break down the common prejudice in Viet-Nam that being a Catholic means siding with the French colonial authorities. Because of Catholic participation in the movement for independence, non-Catholics are able to see that the Church is not allied with any political power. This prejudice has been the major obstacle to the spread of the Faith.

Viet-Nam's geographical position makes it a potential fountainhead for the conversion of the Far East. Situated at the Southeastern tip of the continent of Aisa, as the state of Florida is located in the United States, but covering more than twice the area of Florida, Viet-Nam borders on the South China Sea, just South of China, and East of India.

Today one in ten Viet-Namese is Catholic. Its 2 million Catholics out of a total population of 20 million form a greater percentage than do the 5 million Catholics living among 456 Chinese, or India and Paskistan's 4 million Catholics in a total population of 396 millions. Viet-Nam is the only mission country in which foreign missionaries are out-numbered by the native clergy by almost 4 to 1. Four native Bishops and 1500 native priests are assisted by approximately 400 priests drawn from the Paris Foreign Mission Society, from the Spanish Dominicans of the Philippine Province, and from French Dominicans of the Lyon Province.

The three districts which make up Viet-Nam are divided into fifteen Vicariates Apostolic for mission purposes. Tonkin (in the north) second largest in area and largest in population, has eight Vicariates; Annam (in the center of Viet-Nam) largest in area and second largest in population, has five; and Cochin-China (in the South) smallest of the three in both respects, has two. The native clergy are in charge of three Vicariates, while the Paris Foreign Mission Society directs eight, and the French and Spanish Dominicans direct four vicariates. Vicariates in the two Protectorates which together with Viet-Nam complete French Indo-China (Cambodia and Laos) are directed by the Paris Foreign Mission Society and the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

THE GROWTH of Christianity in Viet-Nam for four centuries in the midst of two opposing cultures, Chinese and Indian, has provided the Church with close to 100,000 martyrs. The first missionary to teach the Gospel to the Viet-Namese was a Portuguese, Father Gaspard de Cruz, who was followed in 1580, shortly after his arrival, by Dominicans from Manila, who accompanied two Spanish expeditions. Permanent missions were not established, however, until 1615, when a group of Jesuits, who had been forced to flee from Japan after Emperor Daifusama prohibited the teaching of Christianity, reached Indo-China. They were joined in 1624 by Father Alexander of Rhodes, a native of Avignon, who is credited as the principal organizer of the missions. In later years, the Paris Foreign Mission Society was assigned most of the missions in Viet-Nam.

As Pierre Le-Van-Ngo, a Viet Namian writer, has pointed out, the relatively great success of the Church in Viet-Nam is a paradox, since it has indirectly benefited from the influences of two pagan religions. Viet-Nam is influenced both in religion and culture by the traditional wisdom and Confucianism of China and the mysticism of India. Both the ceremonials connected with ancestor worship, and the strict ethical code inherited from Confucianism have directly prepared the Viet-Namese for Christianity. The constant interplay of the culture of India and that of China have broadened the residents of Viet-Nam, who live at the crossroads between the two great civilizations, and made them open-minded.

Now that one of the greatest obstacles confronting the spread of the Faith—the prejudice that Catholicism is synonymous with French colonial rule—is being broken down, it is believed that the Church faces a bright future. E. Duperray, in his study, emphasizes that the Church now has an opportunity to make its social doctrine known.

In this respect, Catholic education has been hampered by the fact that there are only four Catholic high schools, conducted by the Christian Brothers, in the country. Additional schools are needed, M. Duperray points out, particularly a Catholic university.

Communists are extremely active in Viet-Nam and control key positions in the "Viet-Minh," the National Independence Party. They have also started marxist schools to spread their ideology. A sustained Catholic Action program, Mr. Duperray states, will do much to impede the Communists, and spread the social doctrine of the Church among Viet-Nam's large working-class.

New Mission District in Java

ANOTHER STEP forward in the organization of the Catholic Church in Indonesia was made on Easter Sunday when the first Prefect Apostolic of Soekaboemi, Western Java, Monsior N. Geise, O.F.M., was solemnly installed. The new Prefecture Apostolic was formerly part of the Batavia Diocese. The Regent and his Cabinet and representatives of all local and regional authorities as well as a large number of non-Catholic, especially Moslem, teachers, social workers, and other prominent persons, were present to share with the Soekaboemi Catholics in this important event. (Batavia, 4/30—CIP.)

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The Screen

Life's What You Make It

IT'S FUN TO see Ginger Rogers and Fred Astaire together again even in plot formula number 52 about the married theatrical couple who dance together beautifully on the stage, love each other and quarrel a great deal off-stage, split up, and then finally come together again. The important thing is not so much the story in *"The Barkleys of Broadway"* as it is the glowing presence of this dance team, the good music to which they dance and sing, and the well-staged numbers. In all of which this movie abounds. Astaire and Rogers aren't quite the youngsters they were in that celebrated series of musicals of some ten years ago; but they are just as much fun and their dances are just as exhilarating as any of their numbers from the so-called good old days. In the supporting cast Oscar Levant, Billie Burke and several others help along the humor and bickering of the story which vaguely suggests the Lunts or any other famous theatrical pair. Director Charles Walters keeps the piece moving at a fast pace and you light-heartedly relax and keep your feet moving as Fred and Ginger romp their way through a clever highland fling or a ballroom twirl, or as Fred does his top-notch solo to "Shoes with Wings."

Shirley Temple makes some effort to recapture her old cuteness in *"Adventure in Baltimore,"* but the effect is a touch dreary. This is not so much Shirley's fault as it is due to the stodginess of the plot and the lack of imagination on the part of Director Richard Wallace. The script by Lionel Hauser (based on a story by Lesser Samuels and Christopher Isherwood) reacts to 1905 as if it were back in the dark ages. Perhaps a young girl of that year who was interested in the suffragette movement and wanted to paint nudes was in somewhat of an awkward position. Her minister-father (quietly played by Robert Young) seems to understand what the girl has in mind, but practically no one else does. There are several touching and poignant scenes between the father and daughter; but most of the episodes (between Shirley and her boyfriend, played by John Agar, or with her teacher, or the town gossips or various shocked friends and disturbed enemies) are more like caricatures of turn-of-the-century quaintness. Adventure is hardly the word for what happens in Baltimore in this case.

The English have sent over a couple of pictures, but neither of them are likely to make you rush to the box-office. *"Miranda"* is a more sophisticated version of the same theme that was handled in Hollywood's "Peabody and the Mermaid." It has an amusing cast: Glynis Johns as the half-human-half-fish oddity, Griffith Jones as the man who brings home his catch, Googie Withers as his annoyed wife, Margaret Rutherford as the nurse who is fascinated by her fishy charge. The situations caused by the presence of a mermaid in the house are funny at times, but the possibilities are soon worn out; and the script wears itself out completely by substituting *doubles entendres* for humor. Even such a good cast

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needs material; and I guess the mermaid motif doesn't supply it either in Hollywood or abroad.

"The Guinea Pig" starts out extremely well with a fine cast and settings at an upper-class English school to which a distinctly lower-class boy is being sent on a scholarship. The problem for this young man (excellently played by Richard Attenborough) is to prove the success of the experiment—not only in the classroom, which is difficult enough, but also in tradition and manners and social relationships that almost are his downfall. The points are well stated in this picture which was directed by Roy Boulting, but their resolution is so contrived that I'm not sure that anything is proved. Saintbury, a public school founded by Henry VIII, where all this takes place, has other problems than the young commoner: the headmaster of his house, his daughter, a new teacher, and various boys who seem to be bothered by many of the same disturbances that upset young people in this country. It is interesting to see an English film handling such intangibles as prejudice and democracy; and while this one only muddles through, it still offers stimulating cinema.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

T. S. Eliot on Culture

HENRY RAGO

MR. ELIOT'S new essay (*Notes Toward the Definition of Culture*. *Harcourt*. $2.50) is a minor masterpiece of rhetoric. If its concern is with decorum, it can rest upon its own salutary example. The manifestation is more subtle than it looks: the manners that Mr. Eliot regards as worth saving are a flowering from morals; and his achievement here is to keep decently to the surface of things, where serious morals reveal themselves with the restraint of good taste as conventional manners, and a conversion to Anglo-Catholicism ("costing not less than everything") expresses itself in a connoisseurship of English cheeses. Mr. Eliot will not take all of his convictions into the market place:

> I dare say that some readers will draw political inferences from this discussion: what is more likely is that particular minds will read into my text a confirmation or repudiation of their own political convictions and prejudices. The writer himself is not without political convictions and prejudices; but the imposition of them is no part of his present intention. What I try to say is this: here are what I believe to be essential conditions for the growth and for the survival of culture. If they conflict with any passionate faith of the reader—if, for instance, he finds it shocking that culture and equalitarianism should conflict, if it seems monstrous to him that anyone should have "advantages of birth"—I do not ask him to change his faith, I merely ask him to stop paying lip-service to culture. If the reader says: "the state of affairs which I wish to bring about is *right* (or is *just,* or is *inevitable*); and if this must lead to a further deterioration of culture, we must accept that deterioration"—then I can have no quarrel with him. I might even, in some circumstances, support him. The effect of such a wave of honesty would be that the word *culture* would cease to be abused, cease to appear in contexts where it does not belong: and to rescue this word is the extreme of my ambition.

Thus gently are we led—for this is prose: it is for the drawing-room, as much of Mr. Eliot's poetry surely is not.

We see that mass-scale organization threatens the local consciousness which alone preserves "the dog races, the pin table, the dart board, Wensleydale cheese, boiled cabbage cut into sections"; that a shrunken conception of the family without "reverence for the dead and solicitude for the unborn" leaves us without "the primary channel of transmission of culture;" and that the secularization and de-classing of our society rob us of both the unity and the diversity which were the conditions for culture in the past. We see, in short, that gradually the tactful argument tightens into something like a dilemma: we can take all our social reforms if we like, but we must forever hold our peace about culture. And here we realize that the talk of cabbages and kings has been serious talk indeed: the diffident proponent of these questions is to be looked at closely. Perhaps the language here has been—if we remember the lines from the *Four Quartets*—"periphrastic," only "one way of putting it."

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THE OTHER WAY of putting it is *The Waste Land*. So when Mr. Eliot says in one place that we can define culture as that which "makes life worth living," his simplicity is not meant to be engaging: it is an ultimatum. There is no intelligible present except in terms of past and future. No culture can be established in one generation of "élite" leadership; and if further generations are thus needed, there must be a guarantee of transmission. Will mass-education do the work of transmitting? I think it impossible to answer Mr. Eliot when he warns us that "There is . . . a danger of interpreting 'education' to cover both too much and too little: too little, when it implies that education is limited to what can be taught; too much, when it implies that everything worth preserving can be transmitted by teaching." The loss here is not only of an aristocracy; it is of all those strata of ways of living, in which any man can find the image of the human continuity in the full, concrete terms most natural to him and to his daily life. Even the élite, who replace the aristocracy, will be without a genuine, *personal* community: "They will be united only by a part, and that the most conscious part, of their personalities; they will meet like committees." And the greatest loss of all is religion. Culture is *"lived* religion"; it is an "incarnation." Of a culture drained of this sap, Mr. Eliot's poetry has already spoken:

> Here were a decent godless people,
> Their only monument the asphalt road
> And a thousand lost golf-balls.

These, then, are the terms in which we have to face the problem of remaking our world; and I know of no single book that places the question as cleanly and as fair-

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ly as this one does. I suggest that it be kept as a kind of guide for the examination of conscience, as step by step we make our way with the specialists on housing, the framers of world constitutions, the devisers of plans for adult education.

But here, at his own request (but not necessarily with the withdrawal of his "support"), we leave Mr. Eliot. For I have already assumed, by the slip of a phrase, that our problem is to *remake* our world; and I should like the word to stand. Let us learn our lesson well from this essay: Mr. Eliot's principles seem inexorable. But even if I agreed with all his *applications* of those principles, I think I should be like the reader he imagines saying, "Well, then, this seems to be what culture is; but I see no course for decent social reform except one which presents rather unfriendly conditions for culture; and so I'll take the reform and put up with the damage to culture." And even if we agree (and I do) that culture is what makes life worth living, I can think of a number of situations which are all but unbearable for a human being but which must be endured, not to make life worth living for someone else but to make life possible at all. This is how the civilized world had to reason a few years ago when it was confronted by a clever organization of assassins. I am sure that many cultural values suffered as the result of that war: I, for one, would not undo what we did. And war is only one kind of emergency. It is conceivable that our entire age represents an emergency—a crisis—which must be endured for many years, perhaps for several generations. Meanwhile what must be done must be done: political communities must be widened, monopolies must be kept under strict control, the electorate must be educated.

Mindful of Mr. Eliot's strictures, we will not pretend that the United Nations is the best guarantee of local cultures, or that death-duties and high income-tax help the family to transmit all that is valuable in its tradition, or that education "for democracy" is complete education. We can only hope to save what can be saved; and conservatives have, in this light, an honest and invaluable function worthy of the activity implied by their name. Their function must be not to re-act, but to conserve. This is a highly active duty, and they may be remembered gratefully for it.

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AND WHEN this crisis is past, what will we have? I do not know, but neither does Mr. Eliot. All I know is that his principles for cultural health are in themselves principles, not concrete conditions; and when he sees them in terms of the kind of aristocracy we had in England before the first World War he sees them in *only one possible application*. I know that that very culture survived one enormous change, from a domination by the clergy to a domination by a temporal aristocracy and upper middle-class. And we are instructed by Mr. Eliot himself that there has been a constant flow of new members from the lower classes into the aristocracy, and vice versa. I take it that this interpenetration kept the aristocracy comparatively stable amid the changes brought about by the industrial revolution; and I suppose one can

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find analogies in the absorption of titles dating only from Napoleon and Bismarck into the French and German aristocracies. But of course the very possibility of this interpenetration suggests an important cultural standard in this essay, and one for us never to forget: that what matters in an aristocracy—or, if you will, an élite or a democratic leadership—is not the person who represents the ideal but the ideal itself. If we wish to preserve ideals in our transitional age, we shall have to be careful to look beyond the ingenious financier, the astute politician, or the heartless intellectual; we shall have to find those values where they are—precisely where Mr. Eliot admires them most—and salvage them as best we can.

Undeniably they will be, at least for the present, less effulgent than we have known them to be when they were enshrined and liturgized in another society; but, if they are worth saving at all, they will not look the worse for appearing without the historical circumstances of, say, child labor, hereditary serfdom, primitive public health administration, and the human sacrifice of imperialism. Here I do not guarantee that the traditional decorum will be saved, or even that its possible loss would be compensated for by a political and economic millennium. On the contrary: we stand a fair chance of losing everything. But the direction of great reform compels us, now by necessity in its own right, now by its offer of the only hope of survival, often by both. In this exigency, I will not predict a brilliant future for cultural values; but neither will I surrender them this early in the day. We know that the context in which we have seen them is gradually disappearing, but we know also that it is unwise to place limits on their fecundity.

Whenever these values have flourished—among the Jews, the Greeks, the Christians; in the mediaeval society, the Renaissance, or Protestant Europe—they came about not entirely according to plan. If we could plan a culture for our wretched, torn society, it would be anything but the genuine, organic growth which Mr. Eliot has described. It must come as it comes. In his essay on "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca," Mr. Eliot expresses no admiration for "the mixed and muddled skepticism of the Renaissance" and yet tells us that it was precisely this unwelcome situation which made Shakespeare the great poet he was. Admittedly a culture depends upon more than one individual; but I wonder whether the same kind of stimulation by bad circumstance is not at least possible. The secularization of our society has caused a kind of religious or at least God-seeking literature unparalleled in the history of Western letters. Was there ever a more agonized consciousness of the need for religious values than you see almost everywhere in twentieth century writing? Mr. Eliot might reply that a culture is a settled way of living, and that my suggestion only shows how far from settled we are.

But the Old Testament records a culture that was far from settled in many ways and yet lived and grew and proliferated. If Mr. Eliot would restrict us to a philosophical sense of the word "settled," I can only say that an extraordinarily large amount of our most influential thought and writing indicates at least a refusal to settle

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into "secularization." We have only to compare our century with the eighteenth and early nineteenth to realize how inaccurate the assumption is that we are completely "secularized." I make no further claims or predictions. I am talking only, as Mr. Eliot would say, about the right use of a word.

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MEANWHILE we cannot unlearn what we know. We know where our past has brought us. We know that whatever our interest in preserving the richness of local manners and local speech, we must learn to live together on an unprecedented international scale or lose everything that we have ever had. We know that whatever the importance of the diversity of function in society, we must risk that diversity by seeking it in the new terms of human equality (and this is not the same thing as equalitarianism). If we cannot answer some of Mr. Eliot's difficult questions, neither can we put our expensive lessons by. Our problem is not to unlearn, but to learn more. And there are few men in our century from whom we can learn as we can from Mr. Eliot himself. There is this essay to sober us; and there are all his works to remind us of the crucial problem of our society. We must contemplate again and again his vision of hell, in which he saw both Prufrock, that spectre of knowledge without love, and Sweeney, that monster of passion without knowledge. In our anxiety about the future of culture, we can find some comfort in our knowledge that Mr. Eliot's work is an indestructible part of whatever else we give other generations, to warn of "how the world ends" and to promise how a world begins.

"Way Through the Night"

MAX FISCHER

GERTRUD VON LE FORT is a well-known German writer, even in this country, since many of her books have not only been translated into English but superbly translated. Born 73 years ago in Westphalia of an aristocrat Huguenot family, she studied philosophy and theology with the famous Protestant professor Ernst Troelsch in Heidelberg. Though she was entrusted with the editing of his posthumous work, her heart did not find peace within Protestantism and she was converted to the Catholic Church. From the depth of her religious feelings she wrote her famous *Hymns to the Church* and many religious novels, among them *The Veil of Veronica* and *The Song at the Scaffold*. During the "thirteen infamous Hitler years" this artist proved her Christian responsibility in helping many persecuted friends and in preferring utter poverty to bowing before Nazi doctrines.

Just now the mail brings me a booklet recently published by the *Insel-Verlag*, the most distinguished literary publishing house of Germany. In this little discourse, originally addressed to a Swiss audience, Gertrud von Le Fort states with great intensity that the Hitler years

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were not lost years for her but years of deep insight. "There are flowers which thrive only in the wilderness, stars which you can see only on the horizon of the desert. There are experiences of Heavenly Love which are given to you only in utter forlornness on the very abyss of desperation." As she sees it, it is the characteristic of such unusual times that the mediocre is washed away, that you seem to see either demoniacally evil or unusually noble acts. These are the times when the power of the Devil and the power of God become really manifest—metaphysical powers which the "enlightened" did not take seriously in the relatively quiet times before the recent upheaval of the anti-Christian forces. Gertrud von Le Fort tells us how weak modern civilization and humanity appeared in the face of unbounded malignity and cruelty. You had really the feeling that the dragon of the Apocalypse could not be destroyed by human beings but only by God's angel. In this hour of decision any merely formal devoutness seemed pallid, man was in utter want of the religious mystery of grace, love and compassion. Frau von Le Fort tells how much the Glad Tidings meant in times of collective guilt and how during the Christmas office no one left the darkened overcrowded church when suddenly the sirens were screaming.

★

IN THOSE times, she assures us, the longing for Christ was so powerful that it seized also those who heretofore had been distant from Him. One of her friends who never went to church took part in the Corpus Christi procession and explained to her: "It gives me satisfaction in these cursed times to demonstrate my respect for a higher world." In these anti-Christian years the Church had empowered her priests to grant absolution and the blessings to all baptized Christians in the hours of mortal danger—many non-Catholics asked for them and received them. The poet is convinced that not fear prompted this desire, but rather that danger tore open the gates to the deeper and more essential foundations of the soul. She was deeply wounded when the Norwegian writer Sigrid Undset refused to believe in the German feeling of guilt and in a German conversion. However she saw no sense in answering her colleague: "He who has stood in the judgment of God does not any longer find the judgment of men very impressive."

Such are the times of trial when all human securities have crumbled and this becomes evident whether or not you have faith in God. "I cannot express in words the comfort which the certainty of God means in face of the destruction of the world."

Gertrud von Le Fort concludes with an appeal to the world to help the German nation not to become prey to despair. "The gruesome ghost of a false philosophy has been subdued; but the godless powers have not yet been annihilated."

It seems to me that this little book brings an important message from Christian Germany to the Christians of the world.

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Books

Briton Hadden. Noel F. Busch. Farrar, Straus. $3.00.

IT IS A question which gives a better picture of a man —a biography which is conscientiously many-sided or one which sticks closely to a single dominant theme. Possibly in some instances the second, highly-interpretive type conveys the truer portrait. In any case, a unified life story is easier and more satisfying to follow.

Mr. Busch's account of his dynamic first cousin's journalistic career—beginning in precocious infancy and ending with Hadden's death at the age of thirty-one—is strictly interpretive and has all the flavor of a legend that has taken on color in the corridors of *Time-Life-Fortune,* with the years. For the minions of this vast high-pressure empire it may even serve as a morale-builder.

Still, as the author sees it, the key to Briton Hadden is that he wanted to be a good baseball player—he wanted that passionately, more than anything else in the world. But, since he was never able to develop the requisite muscular coordination, he was thwarted of a life-long ambition. There were two results: he adopted permanently the stance, the amble and other mannerisms of the ball player, "of all ball players"—even to a one-syllable vocabulary; he also set out to make a million so that he could purchase the New York Yankees baseball team.

Time magazine, which he founded with his arch-rival of highly competitive school and college days, Henry Luce, was the instrument with which he planned to make his pile (he started with nothing). Before he died he had amassed his million, with a little to spare. An amazing if pathetic American success story.

Anyone interested in journalism could not fail to be intrigued by this appropriately breathless story. Its tone is exactly right. One of its most fascinating aspects is the explanation of how *Time's* clipped style came to be developed. The magazine was founded on the assumption that Americans were not well informed—a fact still substantiated by the un-newsworthiness of most out-of-town papers. Mr. Busch assumes throughout that the weekly result of *Time's* processing of the news is a genuine informing of the public. When, for instance, he says that *Time* was founded "to enable each reader to absorb all the news," he continues blissfully oblivious of how many of that magazine's colorful, featured items are of the man-bites-dog variety.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN.

Nathaniel Hawthorne. Mark Van Doren. Sloane. $3.50.

THIS BRIEF critical biography, the latest volume in the distinguished new American Men of Letters series, maintains an admirable balance between narrative and comment and is a model of its kind. Mr. Van Doren, a poet here writing criticism, does full justice to Hawthorne, who was a poet writing fiction. He has weighed the findings of the most recent scholarship, as well as the older biographical and critical studies, and blended them into a beautifully written and fresh interpretation of Hawthorne and his work. The book is infused with poetic insight, and provides a moving and convincing picture of one of the greatest American writers.

Mr. Van Doren has succeeded in almost closing the

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Msgr. Knox, in case you hadn't noticed, is certainly a remarkable man. *Newsweek* which (quicker off the mark than any Catholic paper) has just reviewed his **TRIALS OF A TRANSLATOR** ($2) calls him "humorist, theologian and Bible translator *par excellence*" and says that he "chooses to defend his work as more than an exercise in semantics and, typically, gives the reader and himself a good time in the process." Yes, he is, and he does. Thank you, *Newsweek.* Meantime, his **THE MASS IN SLOW MOTION** ($2.50) is still leading on our weekly sales list, **Caryll Houselander's THE PASSION OF THE INFANT CHRIST** ($1.75) never having quite managed to catch it, but **Dom Hubert van Zeller's WE DIE STANDING UP** ($2) is beginning to look as if it might presently pass them both. (We really *must* stop talking about books as if they were horses.)

We have heard talk of this Father van Zeller "stepping into Father Leen's shoes." Well, maybe, though he writes much more lightheartedly than Father Leen, bless him, ever did. **Father Leen's PROGRESS THROUGH MENTAL PRAYER** ($3) and **IN THE LIKENESS OF CHRIST** ($3) are both available if anyone wants to compare them.

We published **Sister Maris Stella's** poems, **FROST FOR ST. BRIGID** ($1.75) because they seemed just too good to turn down. We didn't expect to sell them: poetry, as everyone knows, never sells. Imagine our state of shock on finding the first edition almost gone three weeks after publication. What *can* have happened?

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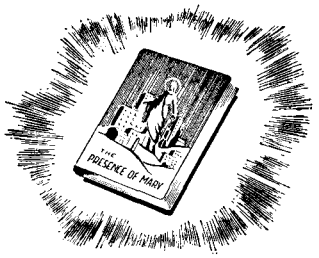

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gap which has long existed between the life and writings of this "unusually mysterious artist," as he justly describes Hawthorne. He is equipped for the task by a special sympathy for the man, and by an impartial critical intelligence which is not blinded by that sympathy. He accepts Hawthorne's own self-portrait—"A mild, shy, gentle, melancholic, exceedingly sensitive, and not very forcible man"—as a valid starting point; but in the course of tracing the development of these traits he insists on other and more fundamental ones in the man who wrote *The Scarlet Letter,* "which after half a century still stands among the most forcible narratives in the world." The account of Hawthorne's life is selective and always relevant to his work, so that the biographical detail is as critically cogent as the comment on specific works.

Hawthorne is depicted here as one who "seldom used, seldom perhaps possessed, his full power"; the tragedy was that "Hawthorne, whether from indolence or from confusion, or from the modesty which he cultivated till it became a fault, so seldom let it go." The man's mind worked on two levels: a tender, gentle, charming, romantic superficial one, which produced the minor sketches; and a harsh, powerful, dark, and devil-haunted one deep below, from which came his greatest work.

On this deeper level Hawthorne always found it hard to live, and in the end impossible. Mr. Van Doren makes a consistent whole of Hawthorne's life from the Salem and Bowdoin days to the last phase at Concord, when the great talent which had always recognized the horror in the human heart broke after a gallant fight against a physical and mental dissolution more mysterious than any dark doom it had itself imagined. The story is told quietly and simply, without melodrama or pseudo-psychoanalysis, but with a profound comprehension of how a writer is formed and functions. The essential quality of Hawthorne is conveyed to the reader with remarkable vividness in a book rich in sensitive perceptions.

MASON WADE.

Female Persuasion: Six Strong-minded Women. Margaret Ferrand Thorp. Yale. $3.75.

"STRONG-MINDED woman used to be a term of reproach. It rings differently today; we hear it as synonymous with pioneer." With this preamble, Mrs. Thorp plunges into her narrative about "six strong-minded women" of American history who, according to their lights, have sought to make this a world in which women have a more significant place than they had hitherto enjoyed. Now, there is a catch here, though Mrs. Thorp seems ignorant of it. It is obvious that the "strong-minded" women of her book and the "strong-minded" women for which men always had and still have a feeling of derision are not one and the same thing. The Oxford English makes this distinction clear, by supplying two definitions, applicable to this day to two different kinds of strong-minded women.

The first, equally applicable to men, reads: "Having a strong, vigorous, or determined mind." The second reads: "Applied (usually in disparagement) to women who have or affect the qualities of mind regarded as distinctly masculine." It is clear that Mrs. Thorp, in her disquisitions about the six women, has reference to the first. Her women are social reformers; they are women

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who may be classified under the title of determined female breed.

Mrs. Thorp's women, to be sure, did not resort to violent action, though one wishes Mrs. Thorp had included Carrie Nation in her assemblage of strong-minded women, and Carrie, as we know, in her strong-mindedness, resorted to an axe. And Carrie is still spoken of with derision. And, by the way, in what category would Mrs. Thorp place Joan of Arc, of whom, despite her armor—definitely a more masculine piece of attire than that of Mrs. Bloomer (to whom the author devotes an essay)—no one has yet whispered that she was "strong-minded." What I am getting at is that the really strong-minded woman is not, as Mrs. Thorp would have us believe, Catharine E. Beecher, or Jane G. Swisshelm, or Amelia Bloomer, or "Grace Greenwood" (Sara J. C. Lippincott), or Louisa S. McCord, or L. Maria Child, her six chosen, but the managing woman, a timeless type, like Trollope's insufferable Mrs. Proudie, the woman who makes life a burden to her husband and her children and any friend, acquaintance or stranger, who consents to be managed or meddled with.

★

Mrs. Thorp's six women happily do not belong to the latter category. On the whole, they are a mild, well-behaved lot, even including Jane Grey Swisshelm, who was responsible for the opening of the Senate press gallery to women, who had accomplished this reform in 1850 in "a fit of ill temper," to use her own words, and who said to Mr. Greeley: "I do really believe, Mr. Greeley, that it is a sin to be good-tempered." She, at any rate, had something of a sense of humor, and humor is an enemy of strong-mindedness. In her case, call it rather singlemindedness; for she was a painter, and, judging from the self-portrait reproduced in the book, she seems to have been rather a good painter. Yet she sacrificed her art to her mission. She thought women had the right to be lecturers, journalists and office-holders. She was all three, and did much to pave the way for other women with something more substantial than good intentions.

She was an ardent abolitionist, and her reporting on the abuses of slavery was informed with a passion which must have shamed her fellow female abolitionists who "remained soft-spoken, meek and femininely persuasive." Her reporting, we are told, "filled a function accepted important by the modern press, a function important to a democracy: she cried upon the housetops deeds which public figures supposed they had shut safely away in closets." Her stories of experiences in Louisville are said to be fervid firsthand reporting, "far more horrifying than most of the carefully staged scenes in *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*" She wrote with venom, "useful venom," the author calls it. She married a black-browed young giant, whose romantic qualities blinded her usual shrewd discernment. Her belief that "the husband is the head of the wife" soon suffered a disillusion, for while her mind was developing, his was not. Mrs. Thorp explains that her need for expression, denied a natural outlet, drove her to become interested in causes and to express herself militantly.

Catharine E. Beecher has even less reason to be called "strong-minded" than Mrs. Swisshelm. She did not seek to break down the barriers which held in the so-called

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"woman's sphere." On the contrary, she was a conservative; she opposed woman suffrage and other proposed alleviations of the female state on the ground that they were not the true remedy. Indeed, if anything, she insisted on making the recognized woman's sphere more secure. She argued that it was not improved property and marriage laws that women needed, nor the ballot; such activity as the holding of public office or devotion to any public labor, in her opinion, merely deflected energies "which the Creator had designed for other uses." She was greatly concerned with devising "a system of religious education for children which should lead them naturally to the love of God." Above all, she was greatly concerned with efficiency among women in their domestic duties.

With this idea in mind, she organized the American Women's Educational Association in 1852; it was "to include all that is gained by normal schools, and also to train women to be healthful, intelligent, and successful wives, mothers and house-keepers." Her *Treatise on Domestic Economy,* her "most important accomplishment," has become a classic. It was her idea that "God made woman so that her health and comfort are best promoted by doing the work she is appointed to perform." Certainly, there is nothing revolutionary in this, and why Catharine Beecher should be put in the category of "strong-minded" women, even within Mrs. Thorp's definition, is something of a mystery.

★

The case of Amelia Bloomer who, through no fault of her own, gave the name to the notorious costume and to the women who wore it, is something different again. It appears that a Mrs. Elizabeth Smith Miller was actually the first to use the garment, but when Mrs. Bloomer, thinking it a sensible dress, which did not impede a woman's duties, donned the costume, it immediately made news, if for no better reason than that the word "Bloomer" is so much more susceptible to popular satire. Thus the movement spread, and the attacks to which Mrs. Bloomer was subjected were, we are told, for the most part "theological." Mrs. Bloomer did other reprehensible things, such as contributing to the Ladies' Department of a newspaper and running a temperance magazine and lecturing in favor of woman suffrage; yet in other respects she appears to have been a good *hausfrau.*

I have left myself no room to speak of the remaining three "strong-minded" women, but three would seem to be enough at one time. Apart from this insistence on strong-mindedness, Mrs. Thorp has written an informative and entertaining book on a theme which is a portion of authentic Americana.

JOHN COURNOS.

16 Self Sketches. Bernard Shaw. Dodd Mead. $3.50.

"ONE OF MY best speeches," writes Shaw, "was delivered in Hyde Park in torrents of rain to six policemen sent to watch me plus only the Secretary of the Society that had asked me to speak, who held an umbrella over me."

The young speaker was determined to hold the policemen's attention, even after they had found he was harm-

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less, and so he did for an hour. That was the actor in him as well as the socialist. It is with himself as a speaker that Shaw seems chiefly interested, which may explain why he has weighted his drama with speeches of such interminable length. His career on the platform began in 1879 when he followed his mother to Dublin and joined a free-thinking debating club where he forced himself to speak at every opportunity.

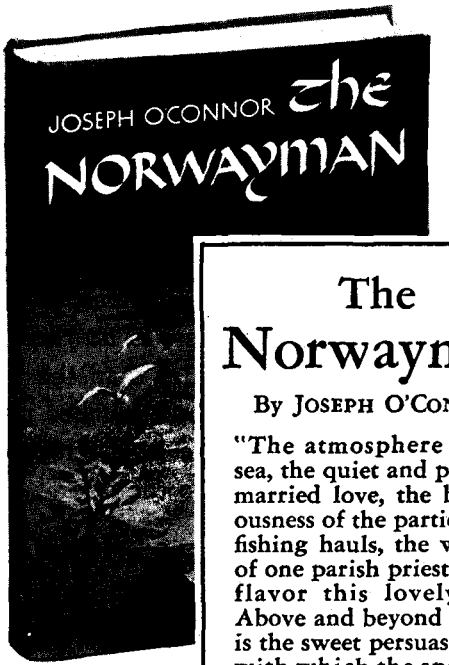
As an atheist and a vegetarian, he next became a member of the Shelley Society but was beginning to find agnostic controversy pretty "barren" when he met Henry George, read Marx and made socialism his career in the Fabian Society for the next twenty-seven years. Thanks to the Fabians, young Shaw gained training in speaking and writing. "When I seemed most original and fantastic I was often simply an amanuensis and mouthpiece with a rather exceptional literary and dramatic knack cultivated by dogged practice." His brilliant colleagues, particularly Sydney Webb, provided "an incomparable critical threshing machine for ideas." In tribute to his friend he adds: "The difference between Shaw with Webb's brains, knowledge and official experience and Shaw by himself was enormous." His socialism was honestly rooted in the Dublin slums whose black sights made him say in *Major Barbara* that poverty is a far more serious social crime than theft or murder. The ugliness of poverty is to him an aesthetic horror.

★

In 1885, William Archer found Shaw in the British Museum reading Marx in French along with the score of *Tristan and Isolde*. Archer got him his first book reviews and the post of art critic to *The World*. He also introduced Shaw to the theatre of Ibsen and suggested they collaborate on a play. By 1890, Shaw was also writing musical criticisms and in 1895 joined Frank Harris on *The Saturday Review* as drama critic. In 1892 Shaw finished the play rejected by Archer. It was *Widowers' Houses,* a diatribe against landlords fattening on slum property, and it created a hubbub. Shaw's only comment on himself as a playwright is to deny he ever said he was better than Shakespeare—only his successor!

Biographers' Blunders Corrected, with the first whack at Mr. Churchill, is among the sketches. Shaw's family reminiscences are written with a pleasing 18th century directness. His father was an amiable man, futile in business and a reluctant drunkard; his mother, too carefully bred to indulge in any emotion other than musical. There was kindliness in the Shaw household but no affection. Once she discovered her husband to be a total failure, Mrs. Shaw avoided recriminations and fulfilled herself in her music. They all took it for granted that Catholics went to hell and that no English Protestant connected with Sir Robert Shaw, Bart, of Bushy Park, could associate either with Catholics or shopkeepers. Mrs. Shaw disregarded religious barriers, however, when she found that Irish Catholics could sing better than her "social equals"; the snobbish tradition was so subtly poisonous that the shameful incident of being forced for six months to attend a charity school for small Catholic plebeians left a festering infection in Shaw's boyish soul that took eighty years to heal!

As for his religion Mr. Shaw declares himself to be mostly a Creative Evolutionist. He respects the virtues



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ITALIAN DEAD END by Peter Thompson, currently a field worker in the UNRRA "Casas" program: " . . . Cartullo was badly wounded in the war. He sleeps with his wife and four children in one double bed in a windowless room. He cannot improve his sleeping arrangements even if he comes by another bed for there is nowhere to put it. The living room is smaller than the bedroom and in the bedroom the bed touches three of the walls; by the fourth there is just room to squeeze past a chest of drawers to the door. . . . "

HOW THE COMIC BOOK STARTED by John R. Vosburgh. Many leading lights in American enterprise were in on the birth of the comic books. These "creations" of an advertising man were first distributed by a string of gas stations. Then they were used to sell soap. When five- and ten-cent stores failed to foresee a bonanza in their distribution . . .

MISSOURI VALLEY TASK FORCE by Edward S. Skillin. What the Hoover Commission found in the way of irrigation and flood control projects in the great Missouri Valley and how their findings tally with the demands for an MVA.

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of Christianity but cannot bring himself to accept the Atonement because "ladies and gentlemen cannot as such possibly allow anyone else to expiate their sins by a cruel death," although he admits that "Methodism which is saturated with this abhorrent superstition changed our colliers and their wives and mothers into comparatively civilized beings and that any attempt to convert them to Creative Evolution would have made them more dangerous savages."

Confessing that negative atheism may make an end of mankind and willing to suggest that his own chief claim to fame may rest on being the subject for a bust by Rodin, he simply can't say "Thank you" to God. But Mr. Shaw took a great risk in writing the story of such an impetuous saint as Joan. Watch out, Mr. Shaw, she may get you to your knees before you round out your century!

E. V. R. WYATT.

Among the Season's Books

THE LIST WHICH follows is not presented as a comprehensive one. It represents current titles which in one way or another the editors feel are of special interest.

History, Politics

There Is Freedom for the Brave. Paul McGuire. (*Morrow,* $4.00) An eloquent voicing of the aspiration and hope for world order and lasting peace.

Their Finest Hour. Winston Churchill. (*Houghton,* $6.00). The latest volume in this masterly series of accounts of World War II—virtually essential reading.

Two memoirs of imprisonment, courage and inhumanity are particularly worthy of note, the first in a Japanese prison camp; the second in a German one: *By Eastern Windows. William McDougall, Jr.* (*Scribner,* $3.00); *From Day to Day. Odd Nansen. Putnam,* $5.00).

Two volumes are particularly good for understanding the current turmoil in the Far East. *Popcorn on the Ginza, Lucy Herndon Crockett.* (*Sloane,* $3.50), gives an excellent picture of present-day Japan, while *Out of Exile,* by *Soetan Sjahrir.* (*John Day,* $3.00), a diary of a decade ago, presents a revealing series of impressions of the national and cultural aspirations of the Indonesians.

For a colorful aspect of the American financial world at the turn of the century there is: *The Great Pierpont Morgan. Frederick Lewis Allen.* (*Harper,* $3.50). And *John C. Calhoun, Nationalist,* by *Charles M. Wiltse* (*Bobbs,* $6.00), is an impressively documented account of personal and regional frictions which eventually led to the Civil War. Much less weighty but quite expert is *The Gold Rush Album,* edited by *Joseph Henry Jackson,* (*Scribner,* $10.00). *This Was America. Oscar Handlin* (*Harvard,* $6.00) gives a broad and attractive sweep by including the journals of European travelers to our shores in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Religion and Culture. Christopher Dawson (*Sheed,*

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$3.50), provides a key to the study of history—it sums up Mr. Dawson's basic thesis, amply documented, that religion is at the heart of every true culture. *Sacred History. Daniel-Rops* (*Longmans,* $4.50), tells of the Bible in a chronological history in digested form, beginning with the Old Testament. *A Popular History of the Catholic Church. Philip Hughes* (*Macmillan,* $3.50) is another successful summation and condensation. And finally in this distinguished group is: *The History of the Primitive Church. Jules Lebreton and Jacques Zeiller* (*Macmillan, 2 Vols.,* $16.50).

Fiction

The Lion Tamer and Other Stories. Bryan McMahon (*Dutton,* $2.75). A successful group of absorbing tales from Ireland.

The Heat of the Day, by *Elizabeth Bowen* (*Knopf,* $3.00). One of the most distinguished novelists of our day with a story which proves somewhat uneven.

19 *Stories,* by *Graham Greene* (*Viking,* $2.75). The range of this collection brings out rather forcibly Mr. Greene's talents and failings as a novelist.

The Happy Tree, by *Sheila Kaye-Smith* (*Harper,* $3.00), a mature love story of the current day with the author's highly rural Sussex as the scene.

Portrait in Two Colours. Stuart B. Jackman (*Scribner,* $2.75). A successful first novel which has for its theme the effort of an RAF dispatch rider and truck driver to find himself again in the England that he loved after three and a half years in the Persian desert.

The Complete Stories of Herman Melville, edited by *Jay Leyda* (*Random,* $4.00).

Scott-King's Modern Europe, Evelyn Waugh (*Little,* $2.00). A lesser story of Mr. Waugh's, but not without its punch and bite.

Descent Into Hell. Charles Williams (*Pellegrini and Cudahy,* $2.75). An ambitious metaphysical novel, in a rich prose style, which at times seems to get tangled up in itself.

Philosophy and Religion

Man's Last End. Joseph Buckley (*Herder,* $3.50), is a well-reasoned and soundly based argument as to the architectonic character of the universe and man's end in the natural order.

Barbara Celarent, by *Thomas Gilby, O. P.* (*Longmans,* $4.00), is a remarkably witty introduction to philosophy of a Thomistic sort which was built up by the author in active service while he was a chaplain with the Royal Navy.

The Cure d'Ars. Abbe Francis Trochu (*Newman,* $5.50). The first publication in this country of an impressive standard work.

Peace of Soul. Fulton J. Sheen (*Whittlesey,* $3.00), is an extended and increasingly eloquent sermon beginning on a consciously psychological note.

Two in One Flesh, E. C. Messenger (*Newman*), is a much needed series of three volumes, which although somewhat limited in scope and sparing in detail make a number of points which are too often neglected by Catho-

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lic moralists. The volumes are: *An Introduction to Sex and Marriage,* ($2.00); *The Mystery of Sex and Marriage* ($3.50); *The Practice of Sex and Marriage,* ($2.00).

Fundamentals of Logic, Sylvester J. Hartman (*Herder,* $3.50). A presentation of this basic subject in highly organized formal terms.

Sermons and Discourses. John Henry Cardinal Newman (*Longmans,* 2 *Vols.,* $3.50 *each*). The current volumes in this definitive edition of Cardinal Newman cover the period from 1839 to 1857.

Seeds of Contemplation. Thomas Merton (*New Directions,* $3.00), calls for a rigorous detachment from the things of this world as the one means to achieve union with its Creator.

Liturgical Meditations for the Entire Year. Sisters of St. Dominic of Adrian, Mich. (*Herder,* 2 vols., $10.00). Brief meditations, reflecting the Dominican type of spirituality, for both the Advent-Pentecost and the Sanctoral cycles of the Church Year. Each ends with an appropriate personal exhortation.

Miscellaneous

Nutrition and the Soil. Dr. Lionel James Picton (*Devin,* $4.00). The range in this fascinating volume is from insect pests acting as censors, reproving cultivators for unsound soil practices, to the many evils befalling man from having his bread made from refined white flour.

China Changed My Mind. David Morris (*Houghton,* $2.50). This study of the effect of China upon a young Westerner with pacifist tendencies is marked by unusual sensitivity and a distinguished literary style.

Poets and Story-Tellers. David Cecil (*Macmillan,* $4.00). Style and penetration are also marked characteristics of this small volume of English literary essays.

The Trials of a Translator. Ronald Knox (*Sheed,* $2.00). Here is another example of the apparent ease with which so many English writers handle their native tongue. The trials of which the author speaks, of course, have to do with his rendering of the Bible.

There are two geography-travel-literary volumes on the Pacific worthy of special note: *Over the Reefs and Far Away, Robert Gibbings* (*Dutton,* $3.50), which is tastefully illustrated with black and white sketches; *The Coral Sea,* by *Alan Villiers* (*Whittlesey,* $4.00), one of the "Oceans of the World Series," with good line drawings and special maps.

France Pagan. Maisie Ward (*Sheed,* $2.75). A life of Abbé Godin and a translation of his book on the re-Christianization of his native France reflects the wide divergences in spiritual development now current in that ancient land.

Religion and Education Under the Constitution. J. M. O'Neill (*Harper,* $4.00). A well-documented attack on the widely held notion that the Founding Fathers and their successors practiced and advocated complete separation of Church and State. In all, a persuasive argument for those who are willing to face it.

The Basic Writings of Saint Augustine. Edited, and with an Introduction, by *Whitney J. Oates* (*Random,* 2 vols., $10.00).

Glee-Wood. Margaret Williams (*Sheed,* $5.00). An illustrated anthology of Middle English literature.

The Divine Comedy. Dante Alighieri. A new translation by *John D. Sinclair* (*Oxford,* 3 vols., $15.00).

CONTRIBUTORS

Harry W. FLANNERY is a former foreign correspondent in Europe and the Far East, author of "Assignment to Berlin," a veteran newsman with the Los Angeles *Examiner.*

Rev. John A. V. BURKE of England wrote this piece for *Sight and Sound,* magazine of the British Film Institute.

Lafe Franklin ALLEN is a former Detroit newspaperman and was for ten months a member of the military government in Japan. At present he is working as a newsman in Washington.

Henry RAGO teaches at Chicago University and is the author of a forthcoming book of verse, "The Travelers," published by the Golden Goose Press in Columbus, Ohio.

Max FISCHER is a lecturer and writer and former correspondent in the Near and Far East for pre-Hitler German newspapers.

Mason WADE is author of a number of books about American intellectual history and the history of Canada. Most recently he collected and edited "The Journals of Francis Parkman."

John COURNOS, a New York literary critic, has for a number of years helped to compile the O'Brien and O. Henry collections of short stories.

E. V. R. WYATT is drama critic for the *Catholic World.*

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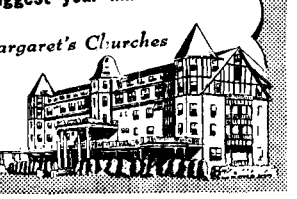

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